

Exhibit H

VPW ✓

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application No. : 10/757,151
Applicants : Michael P. Casey *et al.*
Filed : January 14, 2004
Title : Gaming Machine Having A Shuffle Feature
And A Simultaneous Multiple Award Feature

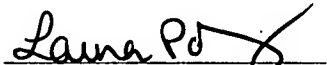
TC/A.U. : 3714
Examiner : Andrew Kim
Docket No. : 247079-000292USPT
Customer No. : 70243

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING 37 C.F.R. 1.8

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail, in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

October 29, 2007


Laura Pokomy

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION

Dear Sir:

This is in response to the Office Action dated July 9, 2007. The shortened statutory period for response is three months from the mailing date, i.e., by October 9, 2007, and this response is being filed within one month of that time period with a one month extension of time fee. Please enter the following claim amendments and remarks into the record for this application.

Amendments to the Claims begin on page 2 of this paper.

Remarks/Arguments begin on page 7 of this paper.

Listing of Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application.

1-21. (Cancelled)

22. (Currently Amended) A method of conducting a wagering game on a gaming machine controlled by a controller in response to a wager, the method comprising:

displaying on a display device of the gaming machine, an assemblage of selectable tiles that conceal an associated plurality of icons, the plurality of icons including a plurality of game-theme icons and a wild icon;

receiving successive selections of the tiles;

selectively revealing a first group of related game-theme icons associated with the selected tiles, the first group including at least two first tiles from the assemblage of selectable tiles, each of the first tiles having a first game-theme icon, the first game-theme icon from one of the first tiles matching the first game-theme icon from another one of the first tiles;

selectively revealing a second group of related game-theme icons associated with the selected tiles, the second group being different from the first group, the second group including at least two second tiles from the assemblage of selectable tiles, each of the second tiles having a second game-theme icon, the second game-theme icon from one of the second tiles matching the second game-theme icon from another one of the second two tiles;

selectively revealing the wild icon associated with the selected tiles after revealing the first group and the second group; and

in response to revealing the wild icon, simultaneously awarding a first award and a second award, the first award being based on the at least two first tiles of the first group, the second award being based on the at least two second tiles of the second group.

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Original) The method of claim 23, further including displaying a legend adjacent to the assemblage of selectable tiles, the legend displaying a plurality of matches and respective awards, each of the plurality of matches including a plurality of related game-theme icons.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Original) The method of claim 22, further including displaying a base wagering game including a plurality of possible randomly-selected outcomes, at least one of the possible outcomes being a bonus game triggering event causing the assemblage of selectable tiles to be displayed.

27. (Original) The method of claim 26, wherein the base wagering game includes a plurality of symbol-bearing reels that are rotated and stopped to place symbols on the reels in a reel symbol array, and wherein the bonus game triggering event includes a predetermined arrangement of selected symbols on the stopped reels.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the first award comprises a first number of free reel spins, and wherein the second award comprises a second number of free reel spins.

29. (Original) The method of claim 28, further comprising multiplying a credit amount associated with a winning outcome of at least one of the first number of free reel spins by a first randomly generated number, and multiplying a credit amount associated with a winning outcome of at least one of the second number of free spins by a second randomly generated number.

30. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein the gaming machine comprises a video slot machine, and wherein displaying the assemblage of selectable tiles includes displaying a video generated assemblage of selectable tiles.

31. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein the gaming machine comprises an adaptable mechanical spinning reel slot machine including a plurality of electro-mechanical reels having a plurality of reels symbols displayed thereon, and wherein displaying the assemblage of selectable tiles includes displaying a video generated assemblage of selectable tiles provided by a flat panel

transmissive display configured to overlay the assemblage of selectable tiles upon a portion of the plurality of electro-mechanical reels.

32. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein the first award comprises a first credit amount, and wherein the second award comprises a second credit amount.

33. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine controlled by a controller in response to a wager, the gaming machine comprising a simultaneous multiple award feature indicated on a display device, the display device initially displaying an assemblage of selectable tiles that conceal a plurality of icons, the tiles being successively selected revealing a first group of related game-theme icons and revealing a second group of related game-theme icons and revealing a wild icon after revealing the first group and the second group, the first group including at least two tiles from the assemblage of selectable tiles, each of the two first tiles having a first game-theme icon, the first game-theme icon from one of the first tiles matching the first game-theme icon from another one of the first tiles, the second group including at least two second tiles from the assemblage of selectable tiles, each of the second tiles having a second game-theme icon, the second game-theme icon from one of the second tiles matching the second game-theme icon from another one of the second two tiles, in response to revealing the wild icon, the simultaneous multiple award feature simultaneously awarding a first award based upon the first group and awarding a second award based upon the second group, the first award being based on the at least two first tiles of the first group, the second award being based on the at least two second tiles of the second group.

34-35. (Cancelled)

36. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 33, wherein the display device comprises a video display.

37. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 33, further comprising a base wagering game including a plurality of possible base wagering game outcomes, at least one of the plurality of possible base wagering game outcomes being an event triggering the assemblage of selectable tiles to be displayed.

38. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 37, wherein the gaming machine comprises a slot machine having a plurality of symbol-bearing reels that are rotated and stopped to place symbols on the reels in a symbol array, and wherein the event includes a predetermined arrangement of selected symbols on the stopped reels.

39. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 38, wherein the plurality of symbol-bearing reels comprises a plurality of electro-mechanical symbol-bearing reels, and wherein the display device comprises a flat panel transmissive display configured to overlay the assemblage of selectable tiles upon a portion of the plurality of electro-mechanical symbol-bearing reels.

40. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 38, wherein the first award comprises a first number of free reel spins, and wherein the second award comprises a second number of free reel spins.

41. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 40, further comprising multiplying a credit amount associated with a winning outcome of at least one of the first number of free reel spins and at least one of the second number of free spins by a randomly generated number.

42. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 33, wherein the assemblage of selectable tiles is arranged as a matrix having multiple rows and columns.

43. (Currently Amended) A simultaneous multiple award feature for a gaming machine controlled by a controller, the simultaneous multiple award feature being indicated on a display device, the simultaneous multiple award feature comprising a:

a player selection stage including an assemblage of selectable tiles that conceal a plurality of icons, the tiles being successively selected to reveal respective icons until a tile revealing a wild icon is selected that produces a multiple award outcome, the player selection stage including selectively selecting a first group of tiles and a second group of tiles, the first group including at least two first tiles from the assemblage of selectable tiles, each of the first tiles having a first game-theme icon, the first game-theme icon from one of the first tiles matching the first game-theme icon from another one of the first tiles, the second group including at least

two second tiles from the assemblage of selectable tiles, each of the second tiles having a second game-theme icon, the second game-theme icon from one of the second tiles matching the second game-theme icon from another one of the second two tiles, in response to revealing the wild icon, simultaneously awarding the multiple award outcome including a first award and a second award, the first award being based on the at least two first tiles of the first group, the second award being based on the at least two second tiles of the second group; and

a bonus stage triggered by the multiple award outcome, each award of the multiple award outcome generated in the player selection stage earning the player an opportunity to win a respective bonus in the bonus stage.

44-45. (Cancelled)

46. (Original) The simultaneous multiple award feature of claim 43, wherein each award is associated with a predetermined number of free spins of reels of a slot gaming machine.

47. (Original) The simultaneous multiple award feature of claim 46, further comprising multiplying a credit amount associated with a winning outcome of at least one of the predetermined number of free spins by a randomly generated number.

48. (Original) The simultaneous multiple award feature of claim 43, wherein the display device comprises a video display.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 22, 24, 26-33, 36-43, and 46-48 remain in the application for further prosecution. Claims 1-21, 23, 25, 34, 35, 44, and 45 have been cancelled. Claims 22, 33, and 43 have been amended.

Restriction/Election Requirement

The Examiner required restriction to one of two groups: I) claims 1-21, and II) claims 22-48. Applicants confirm the election of group II, which includes claims 22-48.

§ 102 Rejections

Claims 22, 23, 25, 30, 32-36, 42-45, and 48, have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,015,346 to Bennett ("Bennett").

§ 103 Rejections

Claims 24, 26-29, 31, 37-41, 46, and 47 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bennett in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,089,976 to Schneider *et al.*

Personal Interview and Interview Summary

Applicants note with appreciation the interview with Examiner Andre Kim and Examiner John Hotaling on October 18, 2007. Pursuant to the discussions in the interview, Applicants have amended independent claims 22, 33, and 43 to clarify the invention.

During the interview, the Examiner agreed that the proposed amended claim may overcome the prior art.

Independent Claims 22, 33, and 43

Independent claim 22 has been amended to further clarify that multiple awards are awarded in response to revealing a wild icon subsequent to revealing two pairs of game-theme icons, each pair including matching game-theme icons. Claims 33 and 43 have been amended in accordance with the amendments to claim 22.

Bennett fails to disclose the claimed invention that is set forth in amended claims 22, 33, and 43. For example, Bennett only discloses that a single award is provided if the player selects two matching indicia, or if the player selects a wild icon and one other indicia.

Accordingly, Applicants believe that claims 22, 24, 26-33, 36-43, and 46-48 are allowable.

Conclusion

It is Applicants' belief that all the pending claims are now in condition for allowance, and thus reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested. If there are any matters which may be resolved or clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the number indicated.

A check for \$120 is enclosed for a one-month extension of time fee. It is believed that no other fees are due; however, should any additional fees be required (except for payment of the issue fee), the Commissioner is authorized to deduct the fees from Nixon Peabody LLP Deposit Account No. 50-4181, Order No. 247079-000292USPT.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: October 29, 2007

By



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